

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A substrate transfer apparatus for a component mounting machine, for transferring a substrate into to a mounting ~~process~~ station in which components are mounted onto the substrate and transferring the substrate from ~~said~~ the mounting ~~process~~ station, the apparatus comprising:

a mounting-waiting ~~process~~ station for making the substrate to be transferred into to the mounting ~~process~~ station wait before the mounting ~~process~~ station; and

a substrate discharge-waiting ~~process~~ station for making the substrate, after being transferred from the mounting ~~process~~ station, wait before a following ~~process~~ station; [[.]]

wherein transfer of ~~an-unmounted~~ a mount-less substrate from ~~said~~ the mounting-waiting ~~process~~ station to the mounting ~~process~~ station, and transfer of a mounted substrate, for which mounting has been done in the mounting ~~process~~ station, from the mounting ~~process~~ station to the substrate discharge-waiting ~~process~~ station are performed simultaneously; and [[.]]

~~characterized in that detecting means are wherein a detector is provided at the substrate discharge-waiting station for detecting that to detect when a plurality of substrates have been transferred into the substrate discharge-waiting process station as part of the same transfer, the detector including a substrate-arrival detecting sensor configured to detect the transfer of the mounted substrate to the discharge-waiting station and a substrate-continuity detecting sensor provided upstream of the substrate-arrival detecting sensor, the substrate-continuity detecting sensor being located at a position so as to detect when a following substrate, which immediately follows the transferred mounted substrate, has been transferred simultaneously with the transferred mounted substrate, to the discharge-waiting station.~~

2. (Canceled).

3. (Currently Amended) The substrate transfer apparatus for a component mounting machine according to claim ~~[[2]]~~ 1, wherein the substrate-continuity detecting sensor is arranged located at a position that satisfies $X < X_S < 2X$, where X_S is a distance from the substrate-arrival detecting sensor to the substrate-continuity detecting sensor ~~is X_S~~ and X ~~is~~ a substrate dimension in the substrate transfer direction ~~is X~~ .

4. (Previously Presented) The substrate transfer apparatus for a component mounting machine according to claim 3, wherein the substrate-continuity

detecting sensor is arranged to be movable to the position that satisfies $X < X_S < 2X$.

5. (Previously Presented) The substrate transfer apparatus for a component mounting machine according to claim 3, wherein the substrate-continuity detecting sensor is constructed to be automatically movable to the position that satisfies $X < X_S < 2X$, in accordance with the substrate dimension X in the substrate transfer direction.

6. (Currently Amended) The substrate transfer apparatus for a component mounting machine according to claim 1, wherein the ~~detecting means includes: a substrate arrival detecting sensor for detecting the mounted substrate transferred into the substrate discharge waiting process; and~~ substrate-continuity detecting sensor comprises a plurality of substrate-continuity detecting sensors, provided upstream of the substrate-arrival detecting sensor at different positions ~~and spaced from one another in a substrate transfer direction from one another, for detecting an unmounted substrate being transferred at the same time as the mounted substrate.~~

7. (Currently Amended) The substrate transfer apparatus for a component mounting machine according to claim 6, wherein the substrate-continuity detecting sensors are configured to detect an unmounted the following substrate by based upon a substrate-detection state of one of the plurality of substrate-

continuity detecting sensors that is located at a position satisfying $X < XS < 2X$, where XS is a distance from the substrate-arrival detecting sensor to the one substrate-continuity detecting sensor is ~~XS~~ and X is a substrate dimension in the substrate transfer direction is ~~X~~.

8. (Currently Amended) The substrate transfer apparatus for a component mounting machine according to claim 6, wherein the substrate transfer apparatus includes a minimum required number of the substrate-continuity detecting sensors by arranging N sensors that satisfy $2^N \times P_min > P_max$ at positions determined by $2^n \times P_min$ 2 ($n = 1, 2, \dots, N$) from a minimum substrate size (P_min) and to a maximum substrate size (P_max) in the substrate transfer direction, respectively, ~~for~~ with which the electronic component mounting machine is intended usable.

9. (Currently Amended) The substrate transfer apparatus for a component mounting machine according to claim 7, wherein the substrate transfer apparatus includes a minimum required number of the substrate-continuity detecting sensors by arranging N sensors that satisfy $2^N \times P_min > P_max$ at positions determined by $2^n \times P_min$ 2 ($n = 1, 2, \dots, N$) from a minimum substrate size (P_min) and to a maximum substrate size (P_max) in the substrate transfer direction, respectively, ~~for~~ with which the electronic component mounting machine is intended usable.

10 (New) A method for transferring a substrate to a mounting station at which components are mounted onto the substrate and transferring the component mounted substrate from the mounting station, the method comprising:

providing a mount-waiting station at which the substrate can wait prior to being transferred to the mounting station;

providing a substrate discharge-waiting station at which the component mounted substrate can wait prior to being transferred to a following station;

transferring a mount-less substrate from the mount-waiting station to the mounting station and simultaneously transferring a component mounted substrate, which has been received by the mounting station, from the mounting station to the substrate discharge-waiting station;

providing a detector at the substrate discharge-waiting station to detect when a plurality of substrates have been transferred into the substrate discharge-waiting station as part of the same transfer, the detector including a substrate-arrival detecting sensor configured to detect the transfer of the component mounted substrate to the discharge-waiting station and a substrate-continuity detecting sensor provided upstream of the substrate-arrival detecting sensor, the substrate-continuity detecting sensor being provided at a position so as to detect when a following substrate, which immediately follows the transferred component mounted substrate, has been transferred simultaneously with the transferred component mounted substrate to the discharge-waiting station; and

arranging the substrate-continuity detecting sensor at a position that satisfies $X < X_S < 2X$, where X_S is a distance from the substrate-arrival detecting

sensor to the substrate-continuity detecting sensor and X is a substrate dimension in the substrate transfer direction.